

Parks Comprehensive Plan Task Force

Meeting Summary November 15, 2006

Task Force members present: R.D. Brown, Chuck Evens, Erick Goodlow, Steve Gordon (chair), Maggie Lindorfer, John O'Connell, Brian Pelc, Pete Regnier, Victor Vang, Carrie Wasley (vice chair), Jenny Winkelman

Members absent: Kathy Schubert

Staff: Bob Biersheid, Don Ganje, Vince Gillespie, Mike Hahm, Rich Lallier, Jess Rosenfeld, Eric Thompson, Jason Wirka

Chair Gordon opened the meeting with introductions. He and City staff gave an overview of the task force process. The task force is charged with updating the Parks and Recreation chapter of the Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan will guide the City's policies and development in the decade following its adoption. Staff is currently working on five chapters of the Comprehensive Plan, including housing, land use, transportation, parks and recreation, and water. The plan is due for submission to the Met Council by December 2008.

The following documents were briefly discussed:

- *Parks and Recreation Plan*, The Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan, 2002
- Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Map
- Saint Paul Parks and Recreation System Assets Summary
- Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Annual Report
- *A Lens for the Future: Saint Paul for the Next 25 Years*, Report of the Long-Range Planning Committee of the Saint Paul Planning Commission
- *Scoping Report*, Report of the Comprehensive Planning Committee of the Saint Paul Planning Commission
- Mayor Coleman's Strategic Plan for the City of Saint Paul
- Executive Summary of the Brookings Institution's *Mind the Gap* report

The task force discussed a list of proposed panels on issues critical to the Parks chapter update, which included the following topics:

- 1) Activities and programs (including special populations, pets, recreational programs, Second Shift)
- 2) Revenue sources and allocation (including the Chamber, vendors/sponsors/partner organizations, Metropolitan Council Regional Parks)
- 3) Volunteer programs (including Boys and Girls clubs, Hennepin County, Ramsey County)
- 4) Transportation (including bicycling, walking)
- 5) Public Safety
- 6) Environment (including forestry, gardening, quality of life, conservation)

In addition to discussing each of the above panels, task force members proposed additional panel topics:

- Mississippi River
- Facilities management/maintenance (including sustainable building issues)
- Marketing
- Public input and participation

The task force's comments on the proposed panel topics will be incorporated into a revised list, which will be discussed at the next task force meeting.

During the discussion of the panels, task force members had a number of questions on the basic operations, philosophy, and performance of Saint Paul Parks, including the following:

- What is the gold standard for parks - the "Cadillac" parks system? How much would it cost?
- What is the purpose/social utility of parks? How do parks fulfill a social service role?
- How are parks used and assessed? Who uses what, where? What is the complement of services provided by recreation centers? What is where; what's missing?
- How does Parks' financial flow work? How are financial decisions made?

Staff will present more information on these topics at the next task force meeting.

The task force will meet on the first Wednesday of the month, and on the third Wednesday if needed, from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. Task force meetings will be held at revolving Saint Paul Parks and Recreation facilities. The next task force meeting will be December 20, location TBD.

Chair Gordon briefly discussed public participation at task force meetings. Non-task force members who attend task force meetings will be given 10 minutes at the end of the meeting to provide comments to the task force.

The meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

NEXT MEETING: December 20, 4:30 – 6:30 p.m., location TBD